



Media Statement

3 June 2020

Fastest growth region needs faster infrastructure delivery

Geelong is growing faster than Australia's five largest capital cities and faster than other major regional cities across the nation, yet critical government infrastructure to support that massive Geelong region growth is lagging years behind.

Over the last five years Geelong has grown at a pacey 14.2 per cent; faster even than Melbourne at 13.3 per cent, which is the largest growth rate among the nation's capital cities.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics data [*compiled by .id the population experts into a 'Top 50 Cities' table to 30 June last year - see extract attached*] shows Sydney's five-year growth was 10.1 per cent, Brisbane 10.2 per cent, Perth 5.4 per cent and Adelaide 4.4 per cent over five years.

Geelong's outstrips other growth regions including the Gold Coast (12.1 per cent), the Sunshine Coast (12.6 per cent), Ballarat (9.7 per cent) and Bendigo (9.2 per cent).

In the 12 months to 30 June 2019 Geelong grew faster than any of the top 20 largest (by population) 'significant urban areas' within Australia, at 2.8 per cent. Only Melbourne and the Sunshine Coast came close; both at 2.3 per cent.

G21 CEO Elaine Carbines said the data demonstrates a compelling case for urgent injections of government funding to priority road, rail and community infrastructure projects within Geelong and the G21 region.

"When you put Geelong's growth into a national context is it unacceptable that the fastest growing regional city in Australia is still begging for a decent rail service to Melbourne," Ms Carbines said.

"Governments continue to procrastinate about a solution to congested slow train services between Melbourne and Geelong. A solution is now a decade into the future and gets further away every day we delay.

"Governments have spent big on protecting people against coronavirus, however, to reboot the economy governments must keep spending on well-chosen major projects in order to create jobs.

"Governments are looking for those projects now and this region has both the need for such investment and a compelling case.

“Existing train services are inadequate for the current population’s travel needs. Imagine what it will be like in several years when Geelong has an extra 100,000 people living to its north, many of whom will expect to commute to Melbourne.”

Within the next 10-plus years Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area will be completed, accommodating 60,000 people. The proposed Northern Geelong Growth Area will begin development to accommodate 48,000 residents, while the Western Geelong Growth Area will accommodate 64,000 residents. The Bannockburn Growth Area will see approximately 6,500 new homes.

Ms Carbines said G21 has a list of priority projects ready and urgently needing to be funded or progressed faster, including:

- Faster or improved rail infrastructure between Geelong-Melbourne
- Duplication of rail line, Waurin Ponds to Geelong (funded – needs fast-tracking to allow faster services to Geelong)
- Geelong rail yard relocation (funded)
- Upgrading freight connections to the GeelongPort
- Upgrading the Midland Highway to Bannockburn
- Barwon Heads Road duplication (partly funded)
- Constructing Bellarine Link (Geelong Ring Road extension) to the Bellarine Peninsula
- Bacchus Marsh Road duplication
- Green Spine – additional stages along Malop Street

The full list of G21 Priority Projects can be viewed at: g21.com.au

See below an extract of the .id the population experts ‘Top 50 Cities’ table to 30 June last year.

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Australia's Top Cities, June 30, 2019

compiled by *.id the population experts*

(Source: ABS 3218.0, Regional Population Growth, 2018-19)

| Rank | Significant Urban Area | 2019 pop. | | 5-year change | | 1-year change | |
|-----------|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--|
| | | No. | No. | % | No. | % | |
| 1 | Sydney | 4,914,343 | 451,913 | 10.1% | 83,963 | 1.7% | |
| 2 | Melbourne | 4,893,870 | 575,598 | 13.3% | 107,894 | 2.3% | |
| 3 | Brisbane | 2,430,180 | 225,819 | 10.2% | 51,480 | 2.2% | |
| 4 | Perth | 2,045,479 | 104,555 | 5.4% | 26,252 | 1.3% | |
| 5 | Adelaide | 1,340,794 | 57,070 | 4.4% | 13,753 | 1.0% | |
| 6 | Gold Coast – Tweed Heads | 693,671 | 74,744 | 12.1% | 14,863 | 2.2% | |
| 7 | Newcastle – Maitland | 491,474 | 24,023 | 5.1% | 5,298 | 1.1% | |
| 8 | Canberra – Queanbeyan | 462,136 | 36,246 | 8.5% | 5,201 | 1.1% | |
| 9 | Sunshine Coast | 341,069 | 38,140 | 12.6% | 7,724 | 2.3% | |
| 10 | Central Coast | 335,470 | 13,160 | 4.1% | 2,190 | 0.7% | |
| 11 | Wollongong | 306,034 | 17,186 | 5.9% | 3,602 | 1.2% | |
| 12 | Geelong | 275,794 | 34,368 | 14.2% | 7,503 | 2.8% | |
| 13 | Hobart | 216,682 | 13,490 | 6.6% | 3,094 | 1.4% | |
| 14 | Townsville | 181,668 | 5,906 | 3.4% | 899 | 0.5% | |
| 15 | Cairns | 153,951 | 7,622 | 5.2% | 1,282 | 0.8% | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|------------------|---------|-------|------|--------|-------|
| 16 | Toowoomba | 138,223 | 6,856 | 5.2% | 1,404 | 1.0% |
| 17 | Darwin | 133,331 | 5,607 | 4.4% | -1,056 | -0.8% |
| 18 | Ballarat | 107,652 | 9,527 | 9.7% | 2,180 | 2.1% |
| 19 | Bendigo | 100,991 | 8,534 | 9.2% | 1,869 | 1.9% |
| 20 | Albury – Wodonga | 94,837 | 6,855 | 7.8% | 1,296 | 1.4% |

Source: <https://blog.id.com.au/2020/population/population-trends/the-50-largest-cities-in-australia/>

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